

ZCZC LBBPNSLBB DEF  
TTAA00 KLBB DDHMM

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE LUBBOCK TX  
300 PM CST TUE MAR 4 2003

WRITTEN BY NWS MIDLAND  
...CONTINUING SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK IN TEXAS...

#### STRAIGHT LINE WINDS

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER...NOT ALL DAMAGING THUNDERSTORM WINDS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH TORNADOES. STRONG THUNDERSTORM DOWNDRAFTS... COMMONLY CALLED DOWNBURSTS...ARE CAPABLE OF PRODUCING EQUALLY DESTRUCTIVE AND LIFE-THREATENING THUNDERSTORM WINDS. THESE WINDS ARE REFERRED TO AS STRAIGHT LINE WINDS. IN GENERAL TERMS... STRAIGHT LINE WINDS REFER TO WINDS THAT ARE NOT ASSOCIATED WITH THE ROTATING WINDS IN TORNADOES. INSTEAD...THEY MOVE FORWARD ALONG THE GROUND IN A STRAIGHT FASHION RUSHING OUTWARD AWAY FROM THE THUNDERSTORM.

STRAIGHT LINE THUNDERSTORM WINDS OCCASIONALLY CAN REACH SPEEDS IN EXCESS OF 100 MPH. THESE TYPES OF WINDS ARE INTENSE ENOUGH TO UPROOT TREES AND DESTROY BUILDINGS. IF THESE WINDS OCCUR IN CONJUNCTION WITH LARGE HAIL...EVEN MORE EXTREME DAMAGE CAN OCCUR...SUCH AS CAUSING HOLES IN THE SIDES AND ROOFS OF HOUSES... OR DESTROYING CROPS AND OTHER VEGETATION. OFTEN...BECAUSE OF THE WIDESPREAD AND SIGNIFICANT NATURE OF RESULTING DAMAGE...MANY PEOPLE MISTAKENLY BELIEVE THEY HAVE BEEN IN A TORNADO. IN REALITY...THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED A STRAIGHT LINE WIND EVENT... COMPARABLE IN STRENGTH TO A WEAK TORNADO.

SO HOW CAN WE PROTECT OURSELVES DURING STRAIGHT LINE WIND EVENTS? IDENTIFYING THE APPROACHING HIGH WIND IS A FIRST STEP IN THIS PROCESS. AS A DOWNBURST IMPACTS THE GROUND AND THE DAMAGING STRAIGHT LINE WINDS BEGIN TO SPREAD OUT...A CURLED AREA OF DUST OR RAIN...REFERRED TO AS A "DUSTFOOT" OR "RAINFOOT" MAY BE EVIDENT. OTHER INDICATIONS OF STRAIGHT LINE WINDS MAY INCLUDE A WALL OF APPROACHING DUST OR RAIN...OR THE PRESENCE OF SHELF OR ROLL CLOUDS...BOTH ASSOCIATED WITH THUNDERSTORM OUTFLOW.

TREAT STRAIGHT LINE WIND EVENTS THE SAME AS YOU WOULD AN APPROACHING TORNADO. SEEK SHELTER IN A REINFORCED SHELTER...ON THE LOWEST FLOOR IN AN INTERIOR BATHROOM OR CLOSET...AWAY FROM ALL WINDOWS. ALWAYS COVER YOUR HEAD TO PROTECT AGAINST THE IMPACT OF FLYING DEBRIS THAT CAN INJURE.

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